

BOROUGH OF RYE.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health, for the Year 1898.

To the Chairman and Members of the Rye Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have again the honor of presenting to you my Annual Report of the Health and Sanitary Condition of the Borough of Rye for the year 1898 ; and a Summary of the precautions taken against the occurrence and spread of disease.

Birth Rate.

The number of Births registered was 107—32 more than last year—of which 48 were boys, and 59 girls ; giving a birth rate of 27·3 per 1,000.

Death Rate.

The number of Deaths registered was 76—40 males, and 36 females—which, calculated upon a population of 3,900, gives a death rate of 19·4 per 1,000. The principle causes of death were :—Heart Disease, 10 ; Influenza, 8 ; Cancer, 6 ; Phthisis, 9 (five of which cases came into the town suffering from the disease) ; Decay of Nature, 6. Death rate from Respiratory Diseases, 3·6 per 1,000.

„ „ „ Zymotic Diseases, ·2 per 1,000.

„ „ among persons over 65 years of age, per centage of total deaths, 34·1.

„ „ of children under 1 year, 21 ; making the infant Death rate 197 per 1,000.

PREVALENCE OF DISEASE.

Influenza.

Though more or less present throughout the year, was more particularly prevalent from the end of January to the middle of March. About 180 cases in all, were under treatment. Eight deaths were ascribed to the disease, at an average age of 50 years.

Measles.

A considerable epidemic was present during the first six weeks of the year. I calculate that not less than 140 school children were affected ; though only one child died. The Schools were closed for a month, in consequence of the epidemic.

Erysipelas.

Five cases in all—one in April, two in July, and two in October. In four instances the face was affected, and in the remaining one, the leg—secondary to a small wound.

Diphtheria.

During the last seven years, Diphtheria has fortunately been steadily on the decrease, and during the past year not a single case was notified.

Scarlet Fever.

An epidemic began in the Infant School in October, and from that time to the end of the year, 27 cases were notified, in 17 different families. At no time has it taken a severe enough form to justify the closure of the Schools. Home isolation and disinfection have been carried out as far as practicable, by gratuitous distribution of disinfectants, and fumigating of houses; there being at present no Isolation Hospital in the District. At the end of the year, the epidemic was decidedly abating; no deaths occurred.

Water Supply.

The new boring at Cadborough Hill, has, during the past year, given to the Town an abundant supply of water, the purity of which Analysts declare to be absolutely irreproachable.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

This is on the Water-Carriage principle, and has worked well on the South side of the Town. But the northern system with its out-fall into the Tillingham river is still unsatisfactory, from the fact that the contents of the sewer can only be discharged at low water. If the outlet of this large level drain could be made in the river Rother, then the waters from the Tillingham held up by the Sluice Gates, could be used for flushing it twice daily, if required.

Dairies, Bake-houses, and Slaughter-houses

Have been frequently visited, and I have no complaints to make on the way in which they are conducted.

Sanitation.

I have made many house-to-house inspections, with the result of discovering several imperfect systems in house-drainage, but have always experienced great readiness on the part of owners of property to have the defects remedied.

In the removal of refuse, the Scavenger still performs his work satisfactorily.

In spite of the adverse meteorological conditions of the past year, with its mild and damp winter, and extremely dry summer, the average health of the town was well maintained.

I have the honour, to remain, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

ALBERT E. VIDLER.

MINT HOUSE, RYE.

28th February, 1899.

